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Outward Bound...Into the Mainstream of Education.
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Outward Bound schools have instituted advanced courses designed specifically for adults engaged in education and youth work. Benefits for teachers include greater development of capacitites and potentialities, greater confidence in their abilities, and the ability to relate more effectively to others. Some of the specific training elements in an Outward Bound program are a close confrontation of man with nature, physical fitness, competition, solitude as an opportunity for introspection and reassessment, activities demanding self-discipline and attention to detail, and problem-solving and decision-making. Goals of the program are to instill values that affect attitudes and influence behavior. Pictures contained in this document have been deleted due to marginal reproducibility. (JH)

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Outward Bound

...into the mainstream of education

What about educators
and OUTWARD BOUND?

How does the OUTWARD BOUND
technique affect the educational process?

How is OUTWARD BOUND best applied to this
technologically-oriented world of education?

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EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Since the dark barrier of space was first lanced by Sputnik, education in America has undergone a dramatic reassessment. Sweeping innovations have been tried - - many of them permanently implemented - - in the organization of schools and the structuring of curricula. In the areas of mathematics and science, the changes have been revolutionary. In the humanities and English, creative revisions also have been planned, though reform has been less widespread. Technological innovations such as television, teaching machines, audio-visual aids and language labs have provided totally new learning opportunities. Never before has so much been conveyed so well to so many students.

But the question needs to be asked: "Is education developing better people?" Educational reform, by and large, has focused on conveying facts, imparting information, process, technology, methodology. Much less thought has been given to growth, development, maturity; to helping young people become more capable, happy, responsible, functioning adults. With nonfunctioning students, in particular, the main problems of educators are not academic, but rather social and psychological. Concerned educators believe that goals need to be redefined so as to speak to values that affect attitude and influence behavior.

OUTWARD BOUND is seen by many as one such redefinition. Dr. Kurt Hahn, the educator who founded OUTWARD BOUND, has written:

> *"I regard the foremost task of education to insure these qualities: an enterprising curiosity; an undefeatable spirit; tenacity in pursuit; readiness for sensible self-denial; and, above all, compassion."*

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

With the possible exception of the parent, the schoolteacher is the single most important representative of the adult world in the student's life. If we are to guide young people toward an honest and worthwhile set of values, we must have more teachers who can communicate with or "reach" youth, and who, by personal example, can win student respect for themselves and their beliefs.

Students today, as always, desire challenge, excitement and answers relevant to their questions. All too often the conventional classroom structure fails to provide these incentives to youth. Many remain unmotivated and detached while others drop out to seek more meaningful experiences in the "real" world. Students frequently see some of their schoolteachers only as authority figures who sit complacently in superior positions of command. Remaining behind desk and grade book, many teachers seem uncommitted to the personal interests and needs of their students. Communication is conditioned by an inequality of roles and rarely do the young have the opportunity to see the "human" aspects of the instructors. Conversely, the teachers often feel equally isolated or excluded from the personal worlds of their students.

An educational environment must be created within our formal educational structures which produces meaningful interaction between teacher and pupil. The interaction must be based on the sharing of common experiences which build mutual trust and respect between youth and adult.

"At home I've often pretended to be able to do something because I was afraid of indicating that I couldn't – and because there was ample opportunity to evade the issue. Here there are no such opportunities, and I frequently found myself admitting my deep ignorance and trying to start from scratch. That's one hell of a healthy experience for a teacher to have."

Photo: Hiser

OUTWARD BOUND AND YOUR SCHOOL OR COLLEGE

Experience gained from numerous projects has proven that the most effective first step in utilizing OUTWARD BOUND concepts and techniques is to send faculty as well as student leaders to one of the five OUTWARD BOUND schools. Administrators should send teachers who primarily are concerned with students and their growth as human beings in a full sense, and not merely in a confined academic sense; teachers who see experience and subject matter from the point of view of their relevance to growth potential; teachers who have the courage to take a fresh look, both at themselves and their work as educators.

ADULT COURSES

To meet the demands of this educational interest, the OUTWARD BOUND schools have instituted advanced courses specifically for adults engaged in education and youth work.

The value of such courses is multiple. For the teacher as a person, there is much to be gained from the OUTWARD BOUND experience. The benefits of OUTWARD BOUND that accrue to youth have been seen to rub off on adults as well. They gain a new sense of their capacities and potentialities; they have greater confidence in their abilities. They gain a wider view of man and hence of education. Under conditions of stress and discomfort, they learn to relate more effectively to others. They are stronger people, and hence, they are better teachers. Administrators have specifically commented on the growth they saw in the teachers who participated in OUTWARD BOUND-type programs. An example would be the teachers' practicum offered for graduate credit by the School of Education, Colorado State College, in co-operation with the Colorado OUTWARD BOUND School. What originally was planned as a means to incorporate action-oriented concepts of education has been broadened to include concepts of interaction not only between student and student, but also between student and teacher.

To this end, the first step for many schools has been to send both faculty and students to OUTWARD BOUND courses.

"I came to this school with the main intention of learning how to live alone and be self-reliant, but I came away wanting to become more involved in the problems of my times, and more optimistic about the ability of people to cooperate under pressure, and later to understand that they have far more in common than their differences."

"MAINSTREAM"

Many of the adult graduates of senior OUTWARD BOUND courses have become involved in projects to incorporate OUTWARD BOUND concepts into their teaching and counseling. Most of this activity has taken place during club and activity time, after school and on weekends; some within the classroom and on school time. Activities and curricula have ranged from outdoor activities of a typical OUTWARD BOUND nature (rock climbing, canoeing, expeditioning, seamanship, drownproofing, rescue training and solo) to units in English classes on compassion, love, man's inter-relatedness. A synthesis of academic pursuit and OUTWARD BOUND growth experience has shown its value in many areas: in the planning of anthropological trips with OUTWARD BOUND training as a pre-requisite; in the establishment of an outdoor laboratory for natural science study incorporating OUTWARD BOUND training (Horace Mann School, Bronx, New York); in a 20-day freshman and faculty orientation program (Prescott College, Prescott, Arizona); and in fully accredited, term-long independent study combining OUTWARD BOUND, high school teaching and action-oriented urban study and service involvement (Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire).

The involvement of teachers with OUTWARD BOUND can benefit education in many ways, including: *Teachers are needed in schools currently running or planning programs adapting OUTWARD BOUND concepts to their curricula; educators are eager to learn about motivation, about how attitudes are affected and behavior influenced, about character. These are some of OUTWARD BOUND's primary goals.*

"It has been the challenge for me which I thought would be good for ' the students ', whom I had come to observe, study and analyze. I had the intention of having a token participation in the Senior Course and breezing through it all while I kept my scholarly cool. Of course that didn't happen, thanks to the rigor of the program, the leadership, and the watch. And I'm glad it didn't."

Photo: Maynard

THE PROGRAM

OUTWARD BOUND is a community under stress where young men (and women) are presented with challenging and testing situations which must be overcome. In the overcoming, the young man finds that his potential capabilities are far greater than he imagined, and this discovery in turn helps to increase his self-confidence. In life, thereafter, he is seldom satisfied with anything less. He goes through these experiences as part of a group, the members of which are drawn from a cross-section of the community. He can observe how others react to the same situations and so develop a greater understanding of, and concern for, his fellows -- and at the same time get to know himself.

The course revolves around the group. From the first meeting, 8-12 individuals have to work, play and live together for the duration of the course and quickly must learn how to function as an efficient team. It does not take very long for the artificial barriers to break down -- social barriers that we all build to protect ourselves -- and the true strengths and weaknesses of the individual to become apparent. It is often the loyalty to the group and/or desire to succeed in front of his peers that impels a student into attempting something that he normally would not try, thereby causing him to extend his own personal limits.

Each group works with an instructor (plus an assistant) whose job it is to impart knowledge and guide the students under his direction. He must work with the group on a basis of mutual respect and must make sure that each individual gets as much as he can from the experience. The course is run on an adult basis, there being a minimum of imposed discipline. As soon as is possible, the students run the routine part of the program and the instructor more and more assumes the role of guide. The course is designed to build one experience upon another and care is taken to make sure that each student has some measure of success from day to day.

THE NEWSLETTER

Through the medium of *What's Happening,* which records and evaluates OUTWARD BOUND-type projects across America and internationally, schools will be able to learn from each other's successes and errors. Common problems of logistics, equipment purchase, safety, etc. will be extensively dealt with in this publication. It is hoped that schools in close proximity will be able to maximize outdoor facilities and equipment and perhaps have older students assisting the younger. Opportunities for university students to work with secondary and elementary school youth could be of considerable educational value in the future.

TECHNIQUES

Some of the specific training elements which underlie an OUTWARD BOUND program are:

1. A close confrontation of man with nature which provides a central motivational force in involving students in experiences of excitement and adventure.
2. Physical fitness, stressed for the important mental health ramifications of physical health and exercise.
3. Activities demanding self-discipline, skill and attention to detail, in which the student immediately applies his learning to clear and real challenges.
4. Problems are of graded difficulty. They are designed to be within the grasp of the individual or group—progress is obvious and immediate, and the confidence gained from the success in an area where failure would have been predicted leads a student to accept further challenges of progressive difficulty. Success reinforces success.
5. Competition, which emphasizes opportunities to compete against oneself rather than versus other individuals. Personal growth and improvement are more important than absolute standards of achievement.
6. Solitude is presented as a challenge and an opportunity, a challenge to the student's self-sufficiency and an opportunity for introspection and reassessment.
7. Problem solving, decision making and leadership are thrust upon the students. Instruction is given where needed, but it is kept to the minimum possible and withdrawn gradually as students acquire increased skill, imposing increasing responsibility upon the individual.

"I was able to see what a rut I had allowed my life to get into. That I had allowed my mind to function only as a job completion, security-based piece of equipment. I was able to get a better focus on my family and my responsibilities toward them and in turn to myself."

THE HISTORY

OUTWARD BOUND didn't just happen. As in most things it was created to answer a definite need: German torpedoes were sending young British merchant seamen into lifeboats, and they were dying. Older seamen, under the same circumstances, were surviving. Why the difference?

Simple. The younger men, before going to sea, had never felt the harder challenges of life -- modern society had given them little opportunity for real experience in their short lives. This was not true of the older men; they had been through it, they hung on while the younger men let go; they lived while the younger men died.

The saving of human life - - this then was the heart of OUTWARD BOUND. In the final analysis, it still is.

OUTWARD BOUND actually was born when Dr. Kurt Hahn (a dynamic, international educator who had developed his ideas both in Germany and Britain) created a crash course in experience and challenge which let young men discover their true physical and mental limits and then use these new discoveries to help themselves and their companions. In 1942 the first school was established in Wales, and its graduates compiled a remarkably successful record throughout the remaining war years.

The idea had been proved and it stayed with the British after the war, then gradually expanded throughout the free world. Schools were established in New Zealand, Malaysia, Holland, Germany, Australia and other countries until there are now 23 such schools around the world, including five in the United States.

The first school opened in America in 1962. In the wild high mountains of Colorado the first group of young Americans faced the challenges of OUTWARD BOUND. Since then, four other schools have opened, and a national office has been established.

THE NEXT STEP

If you, members of your staff or your students are interested in participating in senior and student OUTWARD BOUND courses, please contact:

Director of Enrollment and
Financial Aid
OUTWARD BOUND, Inc.
Andover, Massachusetts 01810

Student catalogues, additional materials and the Newsletter, *What's Happening,* can be obtained by writing to:

Mainstream Coordinator
OUTWARD BOUND, Inc.
Andover, Massachusetts 01810

"Education should provide an environment that fosters a willingness to experiment and change, an honesty in communication and action, personal growth and integrity, the development of self-discipline, the ability to face challenges, and the growth of curiosity, optimism and leadership."

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OUTWARD BOUND is beacon and revelation:
The focused eye,
The tuned ear,
The comprehending mind.
It is vision of infinite universe
And of promise and power within:
To discover oneself,
To communicate with,
And serve others.

OUTWARD BOUND is release of resource,
The on switch of self;
It locates and identifies
Personal freedom.

Harvey Gross